


FLIGHT JACKET

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

April 30, 2012

A group of Marines are participating in an aquatic workout at a training tank. They are lined up on a white tiled platform, leaning forward and diving into the blue water. The background shows a building with a brown roof and blue umbrellas. The sky is clear and blue.

Marines dive into aquatic workouts

Service members
try new
workout routine
at training tank



‘Dealer 54’ honored on USMC flight line

Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369 Marines and sailors gathered at their squadron aboard Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, to rededicate their flight line in memory of one of their own.

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H2O workout to improve running, strength

Marines enroll in aquatic workout programs at the MCAS Mirmar Combat Training Tank to improve running abilities and strength.

For full story, click [16](#)



Respect for nature: protecting fairy shrimp

In addition to the hundreds of Marines and sailors aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., the endangered San Diego fairy shrimp have taken residence.

For full story, click [25](#)



Maj. Gen. Andrew O'Donnell Jr.
Commanding General
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



Col. Frank A. Richie
Commanding Officer
MCAS Miramar

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The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office. Comments or questions should be directed to 858-577-6000.

Lamb Chop Loves America Show debuts at Bob Hope Theater

Photos by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist

(Right) Mallory Lewis and Lamb Chop debut the Lamb Chop Loves America Show at the Bob Hope Theater aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 19. The crowd enjoyed a variety of songs and storytelling of the nation's history.



Mallory Lewis and Lamb Chop debut the Lamb Chop Loves America Show at the Bob Hope Theater aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 19.



(Left) A family watches Mallory Lewis and Lamb Chop during the Lamb Chop Loves America Show at the Bob Hope Theater aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 19. The theatre hosted multiple events throughout April in support of the Month of the Military Child.



ON THE COVER:

Service members dive into the Combat Training Tank to perform swim sprints aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 16. H2O Boot Camp combines swimming with core and leg exercises to help improve leg, abdominal and arm strength and lung capacity. (Photo by Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner.)

Heavy helicopter repair aboard MCAS Miramar

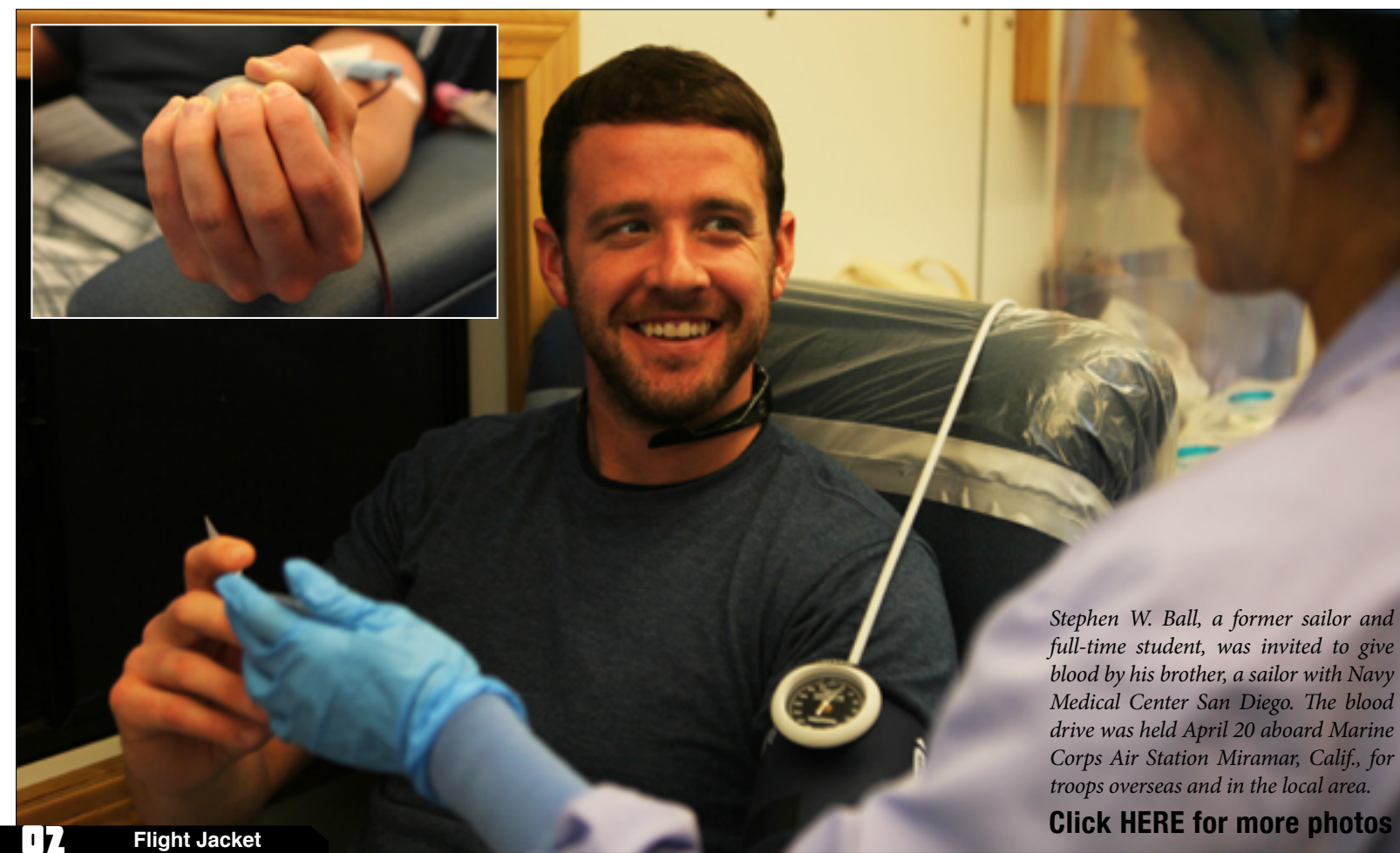


Sgt. Tim Creeks, left, an Olathe, Kan., native, Sgt. Derek Hobbs, center, a Garden City, Mich., native and Lance Cpl. Vinson Michael, right, a Houston native, all airframe mechanics with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 361, work together to repair a broken strut on a CH-53E Super Stallion aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 23. A strut is a piece of the landing gear that allows the helicopter to land smoothly by absorbing shock. (Photo by Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner.)

Click [HERE](#) for more photos

Blood drive encourages donors to give gift of life

Photos by Pfc. Michelle Piehl



Stephen W. Ball, a former sailor and full-time student, was invited to give blood by his brother, a sailor with Navy Medical Center San Diego. The blood drive was held April 20 aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., for troops overseas and in the local area.

Click [HERE](#) for more photos

Marine Mart Rodeo Round-Up entertains service members



Cpl. Anthony Scalia, an F/A-18 engine mechanic with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323 and a Monroe, La., native, lassos a fake bull during the Marine Mart Rodeo Round-Up aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 17. Lakeside Rodeo representatives taught service members how to throw a lasso and offered rodeo tickets for those who performed it correctly. (Photo by Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner.)

Click [HERE](#) for more photos



Marines enter to win four Lakeside Rodeo tickets from KSON-FM, a local country radio station, during the Marine Mart Rodeo Round-Up aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 17. Marines could also win tickets by correctly throwing a lasso around a fake bull or making a horse shoe toss. (Photo by Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner.)

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'A Salute to Veterans' parade hosts 3rd MAW Band

Click [HERE](#) for more photos



RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Members of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., perform patriotic tunes in the A Salute to Veterans Parade in Riverside, Calif., April 21. The seventh annual event featured marching bands, fly-overs, color guards and veteran groups. (Photo by Pfc. Michelle Piehl)



Making the cut: Miramar Falcons football

Photos by Sgt. Lauren Henson

(Top) Active duty service members gather here for the first Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Falcons tackle football team meeting April 20. Coach Ross Blain, the Falcons head coach and a Miami native, talks to the service members wanting to join the team about what he expects from his players.

(Right top) The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Falcons football team won the 2011 Best of the West championship, and the team plans to keep that title and add to its collection of trophies in 2012. On April 20 the Falcons had their first team meeting of the season to recruit new members as well as welcome back previous members. For more information on the MCAS Miramar Falcons contact 858-577-1202.

(Right bottom) The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Falcons football coaching staff (from left to right) Trey Gamble, Glenn Martinez, Todd Howard, Jason Small, Cheer Director Charlene Quinn, Honorary Coach Thomas VanderLaan, Donnevan Dixon, Head Coach Ross Blain, and Jose Ruiz are dedicated to ensuring the Miramar Falcons have another great season. The coaching staff gathered on April 20 for the first Falcons football team meeting of the season.





Marines attended a drawdown brief hosted by Headquarters Marine Corps aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 25. The Marine Corps plans to reduce manpower in specific military occupational specialties by 20,000 Marines within the next four years.

Drawdown brief draws crowd

Photos by Pfc. Michelle Piehl



Marines listen to a brief addressing the corps-wide drawdown aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 25. The brief provided details of the Marine Corps drawdown and options for Marines leaving active-duty service early within the next four years.



Col. William A. Tosick, with Manpower Plans, Programs and Budget Branch, Headquarters Marine Corps, explains effects of the corps-wide drawdown during a brief aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 25. The brief explained options for Marines interested in leaving active-duty service early within the next four years.

Click [HERE](#) for more photos



Dancers perform to celebrate Month of the Military Child

Photos by Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner

(Right) A dancer from San Diego Civic Dance Arts performs during a Month of the Military Child event here April 26. Marine Corps Community Services hosted this event and also showed a free movie for military families after the performance, celebrating April as the Month of the Military Child.

(Below) Dancers from San Diego Civic Dance Arts perform for a Month of the Military Child event here April 26. Young dancers from ages six to 17 performed for military families, celebrating April as the Month of the Military Child.

Click [HERE](#) for more photos



‘Dealer 54’ honored on USMC flight line

Story and photos by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot with 3rd MAW forward

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan — Marines and sailors with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369, the “Gunfighters,” gathered at their squadron aboard Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, April 17, 2012, to rededicate their flight line in memory of one of their own.

The Gunfighters mounted a plaque at their flight line entrance in honor of Maj. James “Weasel” Weis, killed in action in Helmand province July 2010. The AH-1W Super Cobra and UH-1Y Huey flight line is now called “Camp Weis.”

Weis, a Super Cobra pilot, was flying a close-air-support mission with Lt. Col. Mario “Sugar Bear” Carazo, for Marines with 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, when their helicopter, call sign “Dealer 54,” was shot down by enemy fire. The two veteran pilots were the first Gunfighters to make the ultimate sacrifice in 2010.

The memorial plaque originally honored the Super Cobra and Huey, or “skid,” flight line aboard Forward Operating Base Delaram. Due to consolidation plans, the squadron decided to move the plaque to their flight line aboard Camp Bastion.

“We thought it was appropriate to rededicate the flight line here,” said Lt. Col. Ian Clark, the commanding officer of HMLA-369 and Shelby, Ohio, native.

The Camp Bastion rotary wing flight line is currently dedicated to Carazo.

“Never forget your brothers,” said Gunnery Sgt. Eric Werhner, a flight line chief with HMLA-369 and Temecula, Calif., native. Werhner is one of many Gunfighters currently deployed to Afghanistan who were present the day Dealer 54 went down. “This is a great remembrance of a great Marine, a fallen comrade.”

Clark explained that the squadron plans to bring the plaque back to their home base aboard Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, Calif., following the eventual end of operations in Afghanistan.

The Gunfighters are scheduled to leave Afghanistan for the last time later this year.

“I’m confident that the reason we had success on this deployment,” said Clark, “is because those two [Carazo and Weis] were watching over us.”

(Right) CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan — Marines and sailors with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369 look on as their brethren mount a memorial plaque in a ceremony aboard Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, April 17, 2012. The plaque honors the memory of fallen HMLA-369 “Gunfighter” and AH-1W Super Cobra pilot Maj. James “Weasel” Weis. Weis was killed in action while performing close air support for infantry Marines in 2010.

(Below) CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan — Marines and sailors with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369 give a “Gunfighter salute” after mounting a memorial plaque at their flight line aboard Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, April 17, 2012. The plaque honors the memory of fallen HMLA-369 “Gunfighter” AH-1W Super Cobra pilot Maj. James “Weasel” Weis. Weis was killed in action while performing close air support for infantry Marines in 2010.





Marine volunteers from the Single Marine Program rise to be recognized at the Volunteer Appreciation Celebration aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18. The celebration recognized nearly 500 volunteers for their efforts aboard the air station and throughout the local community. Representatives from other volunteer programs, such as the Great Escape, Navy Marine Corps Relief Society and YMCA also attended the celebration.



Gunnery Sgt. Victor Ney, the enlisted conductor with the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band and a Vian, Okla., native, conducts the band during the Volunteer Appreciation Celebration aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18.

Volunteers appreciation celebration recognizes kindness

Story and photos by
Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner

Marine Corps Community Services hosted a ceremony to recognize volunteers aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18.

Organizations acknowledged for volunteer work included the Single Marine Program, Great Escape, Navy Marine Corps Relief Society and multiple units aboard the air station.

MCCS officially recognizes volunteers during April, which has been Volunteer Appreciation Month for more than 10 years.

The annual Volunteer Appreciation Celebration included a performance by the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band and recognized 130 of 500 volunteers. One fifth of the names submitted to be recognized were active-duty service members.

Marines, sailors and civilians were recognized for their work welcoming home service members, helping at the food locker and reaching out in the surrounding communities.

“You see multiple Marines volunteering with multiple programs, especially the Single Marine Program,” said Stacy Brooks, a Marine Corps Community Services event coordinator. “Marines volunteer with kids a lot, and the kids love it.”

Staff Sgt. Eric M. Sierra, utilities chief with Combat Logistics Company 11 and a Bronx, N.Y., native, volunteers for the gratitude of giving back and making a difference to the community.

“Most of the time you’re workin’ with either young children or people in need,” said Sierra. “It’s a good feeling to see them, because a lot of the time [the people you are helping] don’t expect it. When they see you out there helping them out, they get a fire in their eye and a happy smile.”

Sierra volunteers with the Great Escape each time they host an event and volunteers approximately 80 hours per year.

Marines benefit from volunteering because it is good for them to get out and see different things and meet new people, explained Sierra.

The Volunteer Appreciation Celebration is held every year to ensure that volunteers know what they do is appreciated by the community, explained Brooks.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)

3rd MAW Band pipes up in Las Vegas

Story by Sgt. W. Zach Griffith



LAS VEGAS – The 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band spent April 13-15 in Las Vegas, performing community outreach through their music.

The band played both in the Fremont Street Experience on the old strip, and at the Las Vegas Celtic Gathering and Highland Games.

While the Fremont Street performance sounded like most of the band’s performances, the Celtic Gathering teamed the Marines up with the Los Angeles Scottish Pipe band -more commonly known as the L.A.Scotts- to blend traditional American military band music with some from the old country.

According to the Officer in Charge of the band, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jack Davis, much of America’s marching and military melodies come from the United Kingdom.

“In early American history, nearly 70% of the population came from England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and so forth,” Davis said. “Their music came with them.”

The most noticeable difference for Cpl. Emilio Ramos, a cymbalist for the band, was the bag pipes.

“It’s a great time bringing our two cultures together through music,” he said.

The band does not do events like this just to show off their musical talent, explained Davis. Any performance the band does puts a face on the Marine Corps. It’s a face that can be more approachable to the average citizen than a recruiter.

“(These events) allow civilians to interact with Marines,” Davis said. “It lets them see that we are a part of the community without trying to get anything from them.”

According to Davis, some people might be nervous to talk to a recruiter. They might think that the recruiter’s answers come with an angle.

“Young adults can better identify with another young adult,” Davis said. “Hearing stories about the Marine Corps from someone your own age has a greater impact.”

The highlight may have been the closing ceremonies of the Celtic games. With a strong Celtic background in the military, police and fire fighting communities, the 3rd MAW Band joined with the L.A. Scotts and other pipe bands from around the country to play “Amazing Grace” in tribute to all those from those communities who had lost their lives.

“It’s great knowing how much respect and support we all get,” said Ramos.

(Above) LAS VEGAS – Cpl. William Crompton, a trombone player with the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band, enjoys the Fremont Street Experience on the old strip by watching the Viva Vision canopy and light show here April 13.

(Right) LAS VEGAS – Musicians with the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band, perform alongside the Los Angeles Scottish Pipe Band, commonly known as the L.A. Scotts, during the closing ceremonies of the Las Vegas Celtic Gathering and Highland Games here April 15.



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In close quarters: HMM-361 aerial refueling

Story and photos by Pfc. Michelle Piehl

A CH-53E Super Stallion flies close enough to a KC-130J Hercules that the rivets outlining the frame can be counted. Round metal baskets hang from the wings of the mammoth-sized aircraft, attached to fuel hoses. A long probe extends from the front of the Super Stallion, poised like a well aimed dart. The frequencies of the propellers combine, creating a pulsating hum in the rotors as the aircraft connect mid-air.

With accurate precision, Marines with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 361 “Flying Tigers” participated in an aerial refueling exercise with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352 “Raiders,” which began aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 26.

The two Super Stallions and Hercules participated in a six-hour training event over San Clemente Island, Calif., and over the Pacific Ocean. The training event consists of day and night maneuvers to qualify pilots in aerial refueling. Six pilots took turns training in the in-air “hot seat.”

Each pilot is required to successfully conduct several dry-plugs before completing a wet-plug, in which fuel is transferred from the Hercules to the Super Stallion, explained Maj. Eric D. Purcell, the aircraft maintenance officer with HMM-361 and a New Milford, Conn., native.



SAN CLEMENTE ISLAND, Calif. – A KC-130J Hercules with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352 “Raiders,” flies during an aerial refuel training mission over San Clemente Island, Calif., April 26.



(Above and left) SAN CLEMENTE ISLAND, Calif. – Pilots with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 361 “Flying Tigers,” based out of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., fly directly below a KC-130J with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352 “Raiders,” also based out of MCAS Miramar, Calif., during an aerial refueling mission over San Clemente Island, Calif., April 26. Aerial refueling enables a CH-53E to remain in flight for longer time periods and distances.

“The first time you do it, you are uncomfortably close to a [KC-130J],” said Purcell. “It’s just sort of the nature of the beast.”

Each helicopter takes off with approximately 16,000 pounds of fuel. A CH-53E has the capability of running at least four hours before needing a re-fuel. For each hour of the flight, approximately 3,600 pounds of fuel is burned.

According to Purcell, an estimated 8,000 pounds of fuel was transferred during the flight. Conducting training missions such as this ensure pilots and aircraft have the capability to fly longer distances.

The CH-53E flies behind a KC-130J with baskets hooked to a fuel hose extending from the wings, explains Sgt. Benjamin A. Timm, a crew chief with HMM-361 and a Detroit native. The refueling probe plugs into the basket, giving the ability to refuel midair, he continued.

The day-to-night refueling mission is vital for pilots to practice several times in order to stay mission ready for any circumstance, explained Timm.

A pilot must use night vision, which cuts depth perception and visibility to about 40 degrees, explained Timm.

Purcell added that the day refuel is a prerequisite to the night refuel. Although the night vision has an array of challenges not experienced in day-time flying, Purcell believes the benefit of less distraction and calmer night air makes training less stressful.

“You’re flying at 120 knots, you’re at 5,000 feet, and you’re trying to take something the size of a Pringles can and put it in something the size of a dart board,” said Timm.

Despite the complexity of an aerial refuel, the procedure is of vital importance to accomplishing the missions of the Marine Corps and is currently used in Operation Enduring Freedom among other Marine operations today.

Members of the flight crew of HMM-361 conduct aerial refuel training about a dozen times per year. Conducting training missions such as these ensure that the “Flying Tigers” remain prepared to fight, to protect and to be mission-ready in any circumstance, no matter how long or how distant.

Maximum control, minimal airspace

Pilots maneuver in small area

Story and photos by Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner



Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 165, based out of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., flew two MV-22B Ospreys to practice aerial maneuvering and landing on uneven terrain on San Clemente Island, Calif., April 24.

Pilots and crew members conduct training flights several times each week to ensure proficiency in all aspects of their job.

Anytime a pilot lands on something other than a runway, it is considered a confined area landing. Pilots perform confined area landings about three times a week.

A pilot’s training can take more than three years, and they continue training once they have left flight school. They conduct many training exercises to maintain

qualifications they must complete to stay certified to fly. Just two examples of this training are tactical formation flights and confined area landing.

Tactical formation flights help train pilots to move individually within a formation. This formation is used to become proficient in turning and maneuvering within a small air space and is also used for pilots to learn energy management and maximum control over the aircraft.

During any flight, pilots and crew members ensure that passengers are safe at all times.

“It is a grave responsibility the pilot and crew members have flying Marines,” said Capt. Adam Gengler, an operations officer with Marine Aircraft Group 16 and a Lin-

coln, Neb., native. “They trust you to get them to where they need to go safely.”

Training exercises benefit the crew and the pilots by allowing them to maintain proficiency in various aspects of flying.

“We do a lot of training to build a strong base for our pilots and crew members,” said Sgt. Anthony C. Knight, a crew chief with VMM-165 and a Vista, Calif., native.

The crew chief is in charge of ensuring cargo is packed properly, ensuring personnel are aware of safety regulations and managing the passengers.

Whether it is maintaining the safety of passengers or safely flying the aircraft, pilots and crew members of VMM-165 are constantly training to be prepared to deploy at a moment’s notice.

Click HERE for more photos



SAN CLEMENTE ISLAND, Calif. – An MV-22B Osprey with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 165, based out of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., lands on an improvised landing pad during a confined area landing training exercise here April 24. Confined area landing is a technique pilots use to land in a small area with man-made or environmental obstacles.



(Above) SAN DIEGO– Special-needs students at the Sierra Academy of San Diego put together care packages for troops serving in Afghanistan April 12. The students raised money to create the care packages by setting up a panini sandwich-sale. The care packages included candy, chap stick, lotion, toiletry items and personally-written letters.

(Right) SAN DIEGO - Special-needs students at the Sierra Academy of San Diego put together care packages for troops serving in Afghanistan April 12. The care packages included candy, chap stick, lotion, toiletry items and personally-written letters.



SAN DIEGO– Special-needs students at the Sierra Academy of San Diego put together care packages for troops serving in Afghanistan April 12. The students raised money to create the care packages by setting up a panini sandwich-sale. The care packages included candy, chap stick, lotion, toiletry items and personally-written letters.



Special-needs kids perform special deeds for Marines

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist

SAN DIEGO – Approximately 15 special-needs students made care packages for troops overseas at the Sierra Academy of San Diego April 12.

The Sierra Academy of San Diego is one of several schools that serve students who have various types of disabilities.

“Our school has about 50 kids with different learning disabilities, and they range from elementary to age 22,” said Debra Barnett, a

speech therapist at the Sierra Academy of San Diego.

“I gave them a choice of what type of fundraiser they wanted to do,” said Barnett. “Most of the kids know someone in the military. I gave them some options, and they all voted to help the military.”

In order to make money for the care packages, the students spent several weeks planning the fundraiser to sell panini sandwiches to the

students and staff of Sierra Academy.

The students were very excited about the fundraiser and putting the items together in the care packages, explained Barnett. After they made and sold the panini sandwiches, students took the money they had raised and went to Target to purchase items for Marines overseas.

The care packages included candy, chap stick, lotion, toiletry items and personally-written letters.

Despite the hardships of living with disabilities, the students still displayed a great attitude.

“I have been working at this school for about 15 years, and the kids still teach me every day about perseverance and how they’re always doing the best they can,” said Barnett.

The selfless act of these disabled students will undoubtedly raise the morale of the Marines overseas.

Click [HERE](#) for more photos



Lance Cpl. Jarrel Cunningham, an aviation ordnance technician with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352 and a Columbia, S.C., native, exits the Combat Training Tank after swimming laps aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 16. Cunningham participated in H2O Boot Camp, which offers an alternative exercise class to running and weight lifting.



(Above) Ashley Reyes, the Combat Training Tank aquatics manager, observes H2O Boot Camp participants perform bicycle crunches before returning to the water aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 16. Reyes, a triathlete, believes cross training through aquatic exercise can improve running and physical fitness test scores for service members.

(Below) Ashley Reyes, an instructor at the H2O Boot Camp, observes service members as they tread water during a class aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 16. H2O Boot Camp is an intense workout routine consisting of swimming sprints, swimming with kickboards and core and leg exercises both in and out of the water.



H2O WORKOUT IMPROVES RUNNING, STRENGTH

Story and photos by Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner

Often, the monotony of running and weight lifting can be hard to break for service members and civilians trying to stay fit because of work hours and what they have at their disposal.

Marines of all pay grades can take advantage of classes offered at gyms aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., but H2O Boot Camp is the only class that combines regular workout techniques and water exercises aboard the air station.

H2O Boot Camp is a class that offers strength and aerobic exercise during a time when it is often more convenient for service members to attend. H2O Boot Camp takes place at the Combat Training Tank every Monday and Wednesday from 11:15

a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Other classes are offered throughout the week. Private classes are available to units upon request.

The class consists of exercises such as swimming sprints, swimming with kickboards, treading water and core and leg exercises.

While the class is open to anyone, it is geared toward stronger swimmers.

“I recommend the class for anyone who is looking for a good work out. Marines who are looking for something other than the normal [physical training] of running or going to the gym,” said Ashley Reyes, the Combat Training Tank aquatics manager.

It does not compare to water aerobics because it is more intense, she explained.

Reyes, a triathlete, believes cross training through aquatic exercises will improve running and physical fitness test scores for service members.

Swimming can work muscles potentially not reached by running. It improves arm strength, core strength and lung capacity, explained Reyes. Swimming can potentially do more for a Marine than running can in the same amount of time.

H2O Boot Camp helps service members switch up physical training routines. The class is both beneficial and fun for any service member who wants to participate.



Marines experience new techniques through martial arts

Story and photo by Pfc. Michelle Piehl

Barefoot toes graze the red and blue mats lining the floor. A man dressed in white deliberately ties a purple belt around his waist. After a brief contemplation of how to defeat his enemy, he gracefully puts his opponent into a submission hold. Taking a deep breath, his voice echoes through the spacious room as he begins to instruct his fellow Marines.

Second Lt. Carlos A. Dubon, a supply officer with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 and a Miami native, has been studying Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu for five years and instructing the technique to a variety of ages for the past three years.

Dubon currently assists as an instructor for the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Submission and Grappling Club that meets every weekday in building 2525 between 11:15 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. The club is open to any Marine or sailor interested in learning martial arts.

Marine Corps physical training has evolved from green-on-green PT gear to more hand-to-hand combat training, explained Dubon. Because of this, being involved in martial arts is a great advantage to Marines looking to enhance their physical fitness.

"Anyone can come, you don't need experience," said Dubon. "You can come in shorts and a T-shirt. It's a very friendly environment."

The club serves to introduce Marines to Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, sparring, boxing, Muay-Thai and mixed-martial arts through grappling.

Dubon explained that studying Jiu-Jitsu enhances his ability to use techniques as an instructor with the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program.

"[Grappling] definitely gives you an advantage in MCMAP," said Lance Cpl. Charles M. Strampfer, an avionics technician with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 and San Diego native.

Strampfer, who has been studying Jiu-Jitsu for four years, explained that many of the techniques found in the tan and grey belt courses in MCMAP deal with the art of ground fighting and grappling.

Since the club operates as an introduction and supplement to training, each member is free to incorporate their own style and ability.

"What's so dynamic about our club is that the majority of us train out in town," said Dubon. "Everybody has something to add. We get input from the students. If I go out in town, they've developed their style, their way of doing Jiu-Jitsu, but here everything kind of combines into a melting pot, and it just makes it so [much] more dynamic than just training at one gym."

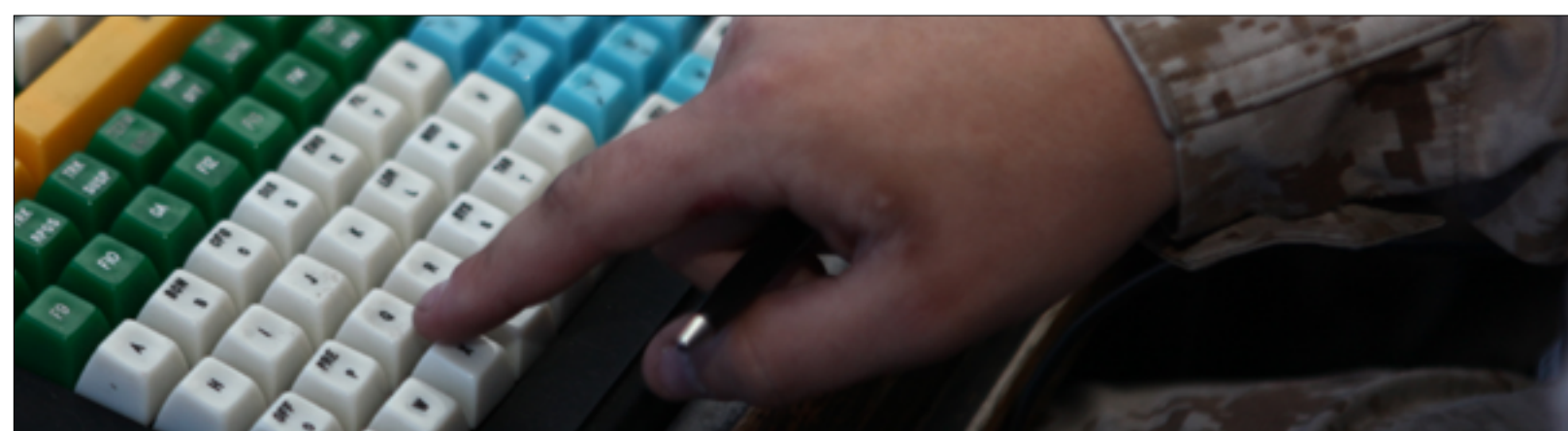
There is no cost associated with the class, just a little bit of sweat, Dubon explained with a grin before turning back to his class, ready to take on his next challenger.

For more information contact Todd Howard at 858-577-1202.

[Click HERE to view video](#)

[Click HERE for more photos](#)

Cpl. Brian C. Beamer, a bulk fuel specialist with the Marine Wing Support Squadron 473 and a Mission Viejo, Calif., native, resists a hold from Maj. Marcus A. Hinckley, an operations officer with Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 38 and a Cleveland native, during a Jiu-Jitsu class aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 16. The MCAS Miramar Submission and Grappling Club is free to any Marine or sailor who wants to participate.



Flying under the radar with air traffic control

Story and photos by Pfc. Michelle Piehl

Towering high above base is an octagon-shaped pillar filled with the hum of technology and the buzz of busy workers. Each member of air traffic control has a job to do: to guide, to grant access, to remove aircraft from the runway or to watch the radar from the ground.

The tower controls F/A-18s, MV-22B's, CH-53E's, C-130s and any other aircraft entering or departing the airspace above Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

ATC is very complicated, and requires the ability to solve challenges quickly and efficiently, explained Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Durso, an air traffic control specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron aboard MCAS Miramar and a Lansdale, Pa., native.

"As you start going up the different levels of ATC, they get progressively more difficult, until the point where you get to local," said Durso. "[Local is] the most complicated position that we have. [It's] very difficult and stressful."

Coordinating with local air traffic can be one of the most demanding positions in ATC. The controller is required to be in contact with several pilots within the four mile diameter above MCAS Miramar at one time.

Flight data, ground control and tower cab coordinators work together to ensure the airfield is safe and secure at all times.

"I think it's fun, you get to talk to multiple aircraft in different situations," said Durso. "You actually have to be very creative with what you do every day. Every day is a new situation."

One of the most challenging and unique aspects to ATC is the training environment, explained Staff Sgt. Justin P. Travis, a radar chief with Marine Air Control Squadron 1 Detachment B

aboard MCAS Miramar and an Atlanta native.

Since each member of ATC is cross-trained to be proficient on each specific job, a lance corporal may train ranks of sergeant or higher. Each Marine is required to become completely proficient in each specific area before moving to a different position, continued Travis.

ATC works together like cogs in a machine, each Marine serving a specific and vital purpose. In order to successfully land an aircraft, at least six people are in the tower and at least four people are down in the radar control room.

Each member of the crew will switch positions within the control tower approximately every two hours, thus making the cross-training essential to mission accomplishment.

Staff Sgt. Matthew C. Head, an air traffic control tower chief and a Sacramento, Calif., native, explained that the training is vital to understanding how to separate, control and expedite the flow of air traffic. He compared air traffic to a freeway system; the difference being the two-dimensionality of freeway traffic and the three-dimensionality of air traffic.

"[There are] a lot more points where you can't see aircraft coming in; some are allowed to fly at faster speeds, some can fly at higher altitudes," Head said. "They are going to be required to descend, climb, turn left, turn right and do whatever they need to do to get to their destination. Without the air traffic controllers, it would essentially be chaos."

Each controller is required to continuously train through simulators, class work and on-the-job training. Simulators initially help a student to develop good terminology and phrasing in order to communicate effectively with pilots. To become

completely qualified in every ATC area, controllers will complete approximately two to three years of training. Since each station is different, the training must be repeated at each duty station transfer, he continued.

Members of ATC typically transfer from a station to a detachment and vice versa, explained Head.

The station personnel are required to run the airfield aboard air stations, whereas detachment personnel belong to deployable units. Each station has unique aspects to its environment that make customized and continual training of the utmost importance.

"This job requires a great deal of studying, time and effort," said Head. "The [more] effort you put in, the better controller you're going to be."

The tower chief cracked a smile as he spoke of the common misconceptions people have about ATC.

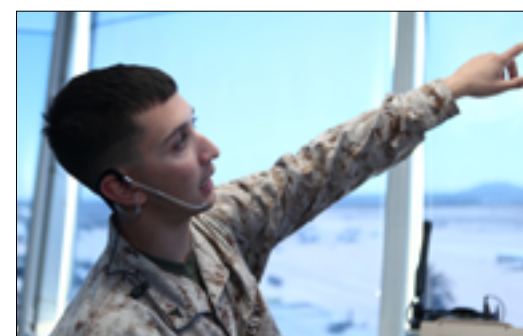
"Most people think we are the ones waving the lit-up wands, [or] that we are on the carrier decks quite a bit," said Head. "I know when I was recruited, I was told I would be out on the carrier deck, similar to the guys in [the movie] Top Gun. I got here and realized it is a lot different. If you thrive on trying to be the best and you have an 'A' type personality, this is an awesome job. There will be times when it gets really busy and time flies by, but for an 'A' type personality, it may seem just like a blast. It's a very fun job."

Marines and sailors fly safely under the radar with MCAS Miramar ATC. Guiding aircraft from high above in the control tower and down below in the radar room, the ATC crew is on the job, working to ensure the most efficient and safe execution of all flights.



(Above) The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., air traffic control tower overlooks the base airfield and a sizeable portion of the air station. The Marines with air traffic control are responsible for separating, controlling and expediting the flow of air traffic aboard MCAS Miramar.

(Below) Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Durso, an air traffic control specialist with Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron and a Lansdale, Penn., native, explains the radar system used to track all air traffic aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 17. Local air traffic Marines are required to maintain contact with multiple aircraft at one time on both the ground and the air.



(Right) Lance Cpl. Gabriel C. Turner, right, an Ashby, Minn., native, and Cpl. Kristen G. Freitag, left, a Dutch Harbor, Alaska, native, both air traffic control specialists with Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron, train as tower cab coordinators aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 17. Cab coordinators work as the assistant to local flight traffic directors, giving approval for take-off and landing. After completing five months of training aboard Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., ATC Marines are required to continually complete on-the-job training to stay current with technology and ensure proper safety measures are maintained.



(Above) Sgt. Stephen A. Price, an air traffic control specialist with Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron and a Chattanooga, Tenn., native, inputs flight data in a control tower computer aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 17. Unlike a two-dimensional roadway traffic system, ATC handles air traffic in a three-dimensional scope encompassing left, right, forward, backward, upward and downward movements.



New join brief familiarizes Marines to air station, San Diego

Story by Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner and photos by Pfc. Michelle Piehl

Once a month, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., holds a two-day Welcome Aboard Brief covering services offered on the installation and the surrounding areas for new Marines.

The brief benefits Marines new to the air station.

The first day covers services aboard MCAS Miramar including Marine Corps Community Services, The Hub and multiple volunteer opportunities.

“This is very useful especially for Marines who have never been here,” added Lance Cpl. Marlon Brown, an airfield electronic maintenance specialist with Division Weather Technology, Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron and a Spartanburg, S.C., native. “The most beneficial thing about the brief was the classes we had telling us everything about the base you need to know.”

Marines received flyers for events and learned who to contact for different services. Without this brief, it may take months to learn where services are located.

Service members toured downtown San Diego and areas around

MCAS Miramar on the second day of the brief. They visited some hot spots in San Diego and the USS Midway, a retired aircraft carrier which is now a museum, to learn about the rich military history of San Diego.

“The brief teaches all about the regional history, military history and makes new Marines feel more like a part of the base and community,” said Cpl. Jay Jayaraman, an administrative specialist with Installation Personnel Administration Center, with Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron, and a Memphis, Tenn., native. “There are so many things that a Marine can do in San Diego.”

Jayaraman has been guiding the brief for about a year and says it is both helpful and important.

MCAS Miramar is the only remaining Marine Corps installation that still offers a tour of the surrounding areas as well as abroad the installation itself.

Monthly Welcome Aboard Briefs educate service members and make new-comers self-sufficient during their time at MCAS Miramar.

Buck Ramsey, a retired Navy lieutenant and docent aboard the USS Midway in San Diego, leads a tour group of Marines through the ship's museum April 11. The tour, arranged as a part of a Welcome Aboard Brief aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., serves to introduce new Marines aboard the air station to activities available in the San Diego area.



(Above) SAN DIEGO - Lance Cpl. Justin R. Allan, left, a ground radio repairer and a Tollhouse, Calif., native, Lance Cpl. Aaron C. Birdwell, middle, a technical controller and Bakersville, Calif., native, and Lance Cpl. David A. Webber, right, a ground radio repairer and Mill Creek, Wash., native, all members of Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., eat breakfast in Old Town San Diego at the Living Room restaurant as part of the Welcome Aboard Brief, April 11.



(Right above) SAN DIEGO -Marines from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., listen to a presentation about the protocol during aircraft landings aboard the USS Midway flight deck. The USS Midway is a retired naval ship transformed into a museum. Marines new to MCAS Miramar take a tour of San Diego during a two-day Welcome Aboard Brief that includes an introduction to the city's military history.

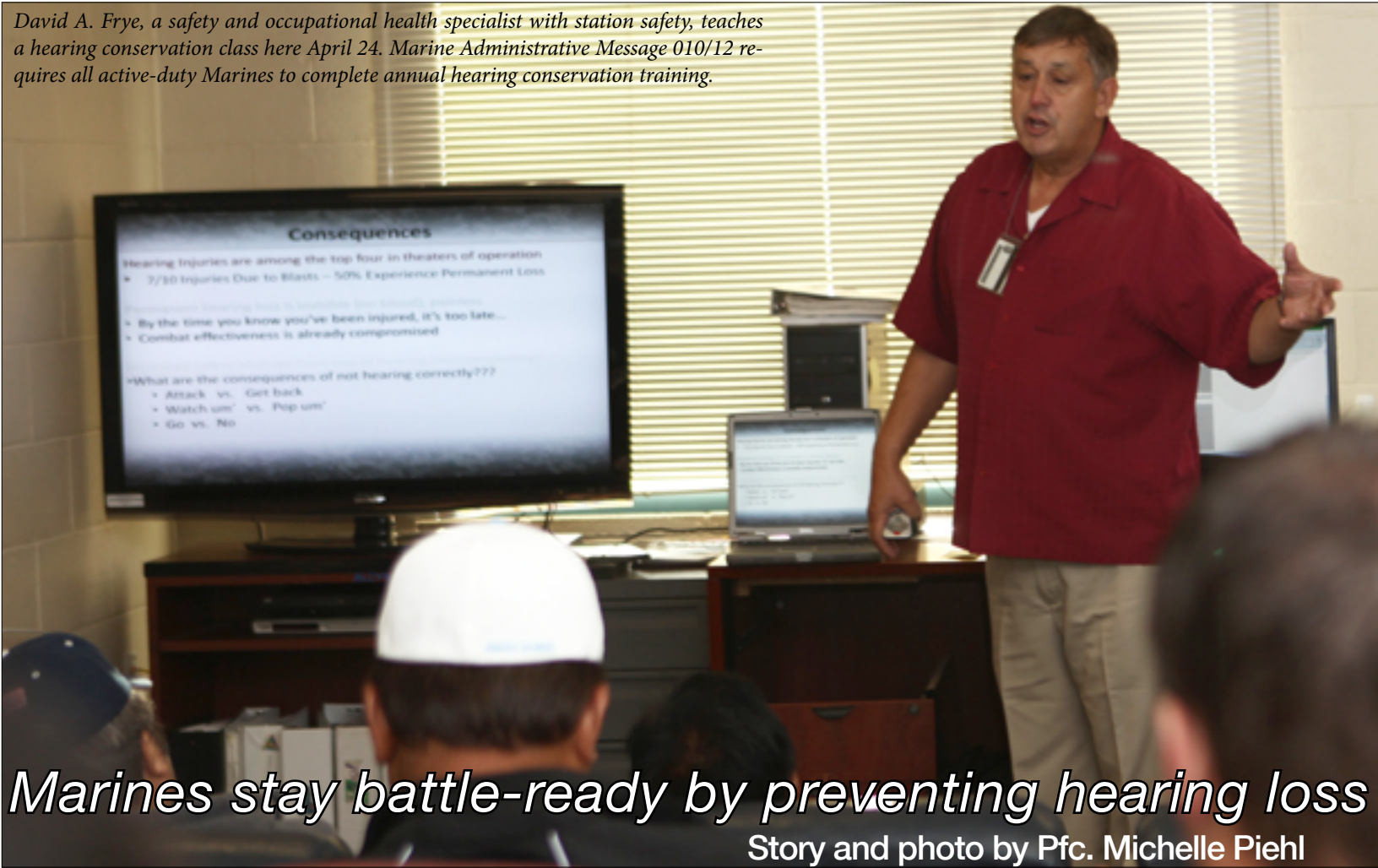


SAN DIEGO - Jerry Mitchell, a naval museum USS Midway docent, retired Marine and Houston native, leads a tour of Marines April 11 as part of a Welcome Aboard Brief. The Welcome Aboard Brief familiarizes new Marines aboard the air station to the base and surrounding areas.



Lance Cpl. David A. Webber, left, a Mill Creek, Wash., native, and Lance Cpl. Justin R. Allan, right, a Tollhouse, Calif., native, ground radio repairers with Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38, prepare to engage in a thumb war at the Great Escape during a Welcome Aboard Brief at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 10. The Welcome Aboard Brief serves to introduce new Marines to the base and surrounding neighborhoods of San Diego.

David A. Frye, a safety and occupational health specialist with station safety, teaches a hearing conservation class here April 24. Marine Administrative Message 010/12 requires all active-duty Marines to complete annual hearing conservation training.



Marines stay battle-ready by preventing hearing loss

Story and photo by Pfc. Michelle Piehl

Per Marine Administrative Message 010/12, active duty Marines aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., will now be required to complete annual hearing conservation training by May 5, 2012.

Some civilian employees working in environments with 84 decibels or higher will also be affected by the mandated training.

The purpose of the course is to educate and prevent hearing loss for those working aboard MCAS Miramar, explained David A. Frye, a safety and occupational health specialist with Station Safety aboard MCAS Miramar.

The training is a result of a Naval audit completed by the Marine Corps Hearing Conservation Program. The results found that many Marines were experiencing hearing loss by the end of their active-service.

“Every Marine is a rifleman, so studies were done by the industrial hygienists from the [Naval Medical Center San Diego] at the rifle range,” said Frye. “[Industrial hygenists] determined that the decibels from an M-16 [A4 service rifle] are well above 104 db, normally around 130 db, which could cause permanent hearing loss just from one [exposure].”

Frye explained that most hearing loss is preventable with the correct usage of ear protection.

“Properly fitting ear plugs prevent the ear from getting damaged,” said Frye. “Most of the time, the damage is to the ear drums. Many times, this is irreversible. We have young Marines, 19 to 21 years old, wearing hearing aids after leaving the Marine Corps. That is what drove all this hearing conservation stuff. Hearing loss is permanent.”

During the hearing conservation class, Frye demonstrated the proper technique for inserting hearing protection into the ear canal and explained that applying ear protection is more than just inserting foam into the ear canal.

In order to ensure a proper fit, two hands should be used. One hand inserts the rolled foam, while the other reaches over the head to pull back the outer ear to expand the ear canal opening. Once inserted, the foam should expand to fill the ear canal.

Unique to MCAS Miramar is VeriPRO, an ear protection measurement technology that allows users to gauge the efficiency of their ear protection. The VeriPRO fit testing program was put in place aboard the air station as a proactive safety measure.

For Marines working on the flight line or around heavy machinery, hearing loss can be a gradual occurrence.

“With other things, you can tell when something is wrong,” said Frye. “Hearing, you can’t tell until it is too late.”

Hearing loss can also be a direct hazard to Marines in combat. In a dangerous area, if a Marine hears “go” instead of “no,” they can risk their life and the lives of others. Similarly, if someone says “get back” and another Marine misunderstands it to be “attack,” they pose a great hazard to themselves and fellow service members, explained Frye.

“We need them to hear what is going on around them,” said Frye.

The class is important to take in order to stay mission ready. We must know what is going on around us, explained Sgt. Yaritza Perez, a bulk fuel specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and an Orlando native.

“You need to hear the enemy coming,” said Perez.

Working with the Marine Corps Forces Central Command at McDill Air Force Base prior to being stationed aboard MCAS Miramar, Perez has witnessed many Marines suffer from hearing loss.

“For young Marines [hearing protection] is not at the forefront of their concern,” said Perez. “But once it is gone, you can’t get it back.”

The course is offered monthly. To sign up for the annual training, interested participants can contact station safety at 858-577-1356.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)

Respect for nature: protecting fairy shrimp

Story and photo by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist

While home to hundreds of Marines and sailors responsible for the protection of the nation, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., is also home to one species in need of protection.

The San Diego fairy shrimp is a species of fresh water shrimp that lives in temporary, or vernal, pools during the summer and the winter. When fully grown, fairy shrimp are approximately the size of a finger nail or tadpole and have an average lifespan of three to four weeks.

According to <http://albanypinebush.org>, fairy shrimp eat many small foods, from algae to microorganisms and serve as a sign of a vernal pool’s presence and health. So if one day there are no longer any fairy shrimp, it may be a sign of pollution.

San Diego fairy shrimp were federally listed under the Endangered Species Act in 1994.

“When an endangered species is listed, their habitat cannot be impacted unless there is a biological plan to create a new basin,” said Charles Black, an environmental biologist with environmental office aboard Miramar. “It’s very expensive - just a few hundred square feet could cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.”

If damage is caused, a new habitat must be created with soil salvaged from the impacted basin and eggs must be collected to populate the new area. Then it has to be monitored for five years, he explained.

“For an endangered species, fairy shrimp exist in very large numbers,” said Black. “I’ve seen basins that have a population of two million fairy

shrimp. I sampled all of the vernal pools around Miramar a few years ago and determined there are two or three billion fairy shrimp. If something came along and wiped out their habitat, huge numbers would be lost.”

The fairy shrimp’s reproductive strategy is to start fast and lay eggs at the beginning of the season, so if predators build up or there is dry weather the eggs are already laid for the next year.

“Fairy shrimp eggs last a very long time,” said Black. “People have taken soil off a laboratory shelf that they knew was collected a hundred years prior and eggs from the soil still hatched fine. If there is a ten year drought, when it ends and there is finally some water they should hatch and be fine.”

“Probably the biggest thing someone can do to help with fairy shrimp is to drive around [the vernal pools],” said Black. “Someone can drive through them when they’re dry and they will not be impacted. The biggest problem is that people start taking shortcuts through dirt and will drive through a vernal pool which can cause a lot of damage to their habitat.”

When this happens, the environmental office must call the official wildlife service, which works to prevent the damage from happening again.

These unique creatures come once or twice a year for a short amount of time and can be protected by simply respecting nature and going around puddles they dwell in.

San Diego fairy shrimp are an endangered fresh water shrimp species that live in the non-salty water of temporary pools during the summer and the winter. When fully grown, they are approximately the size of a finger nail and have a lifespan of three to four weeks.



Makin’ the move with DMO

Story and photos by Sgt. Lauren Henson

North to South and East to West, the Distribution Management Office ensures wherever Marines and sailors go, their belongings go too.

The DMO is service members’ first stop in coordinating a move. DMO works with Naval Base San Diego and civilian contractors to get service members belongings packed up and shipped out.

“Everything from household goods to [items]being sent to Afghanistan to passports DMO handles,” said Sgt. Matt Tarkey, a DMO shipping clerk with Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron and Apple Valley, Minn., native.

The office, located in the Joint Reception Center, helps Marines transition to and from

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif. The JRC houses many other relocation aids, including the Welcome Aboard section for service members and their families who are new to the air station.

When it comes to moving, time is the key. The DMO tries to ensure everything goes as smoothly as possible.

“Marines wait till the last minute,” said Ben-nis Branch, a DMO specialist. “It’s basically new Marines that wait until the last minute and then remember ‘oh yeah, I am moving my stuff.’ Then they want us to come and move them in a week.”

The peak season for distribution manage-

ment is from April to September. This is when the most Marines and sailors with children are assigned permanent change of station orders because school is out for the summer. Due to the increase in service requests during this time, a DMO request needs to be submitted at least one month in advance. During the off-season, three weeks notice is the standard time needed to coordinate a move.

No matter where a service member is going to or coming from, DMO is available to make sure their belongings get where they need to be. For more information on relocation assistance contact the DMO at 858-577-1805.

Click HERE for more photos



(Left) Sgt. Charly Laura, a Salem, Mass., native, helps Cpl. Kyle Kuchelmeister, a Dallas native, both distribution management specialists, with Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron, with preparing an order to be shipped from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 20. Distribution Management Office handles all aspects of the moving process for Marines and sailors. Distribution Management Office handles all aspects of the moving process for Marines and sailors. For more information on DMO services contact 858-577-1400.



(Right) Lance Cpl. Erik Schieb, a distribution management specialist with Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron and a Toledo, Ohio, native, moves a shipment to the loading dock where it will be transported to its new destination from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 20. Distribution Management assists service members in the moving process from start to finish, including handling passports and shipping. The Distribution Management Office is located in the Joint Reception Center building and is open Monday through Friday.

The Miramar Minute

3rd MAW Band puts on Vegas performance

Video by Sgt. Zach Griffith



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For information on Marine Corps Community Services, events and announcements click the MCCS logo for their weekly newsletter.

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Alternatives to Spanking

Spanking is a common practice in the USA. It is socially accepted in this country as a method of punishment for children. The question is does it work? According to a parenting expert, spanking is a learned behavior. When a child is physically punished, it teaches them to practice the same behavior on others. Spanking also only tells the child what not to do. The real goal is to teach the child an alternative way to behave, and to praise the child when doing so. This is where learning really takes place. For example: "You are supposed to sit on chairs, not stand on them." You can assist the child in sitting by gently moving them into the appropriate position. Once they sit appropriately, you follow it up with praise like: "Good job!" This type of redirection gives a child an idea of what appropriate behavior they should do. Once they are praised, they will want to receive more praise, therefore continuing the appropriate behavior. Other alternatives to spanking are: Loss of privilege-like taking away a toy or TV; Restitution- like if you dirty it, you now have to clean it; Grounded- you have to stay inside the house for a specific amount of time; Time out- you have to sit quietly for a specific amount of time. These alternatives have to be age appropriate. For example, you only put a 2 year old in time out for 2 minutes, or you take a cell phone away from a teenager. Practicing these techniques can help you discipline your child without having to use physical force, and at the same time it teaches them appropriate ways to behave.